

JOSH GOTTHEIMER
5TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY



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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

More than five hundred thousand students in New Jersey are eligible for free and reduced price lunches throughout the school year. Unfortunately, as students and families face the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, many are also facing food insecurity. I appreciate the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) efforts to help schools quickly adapt their child nutrition programs to meet the demands of this unprecedented crisis.

Schools across my District are currently addressing a wide range of issues as they work to provide quality education to New Jersey students. We must ensure that maintaining the food security of students does not become one of these problems. As schools modify their curriculums and calendars, many will postpone or cancel their spring breaks; however, some will continue with them as scheduled. It has come to my attention that schools are now administering meals through the Summer Food Service Program and the Seamless Summer Option of the National School Lunch Program and that meals served under these programs during scheduled breaks will not be reimbursed. I ask that this restriction be waived and that schools continue to be reimbursed for meals served through their spring breaks, given that students will continue to be home in light of this public health crisis.

The health of our children is more important than ever. I look forward to working with USDA throughout this crisis, and I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Josh Gottheimer".

Josh Gottheimer
MEMBER OF CONGRESS